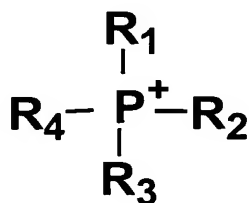


AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (original): A polyester resin composition which is a resin composition comprising a polyester and a laminar silicate that is 60-100% modified by an organic phosphonium ion represented by formula (1) below, wherein the content of said laminar silicate is 0.01-20 wt% as inorganic ash and the terminal OH group content is 0.1-45 eq/ton.



(1)

(wherein R₁, R₂, R₃ and R₄ each independently represent a C1-30 hydrocarbon group or a hetero atom-containing hydrocarbon group, and any from among R₁, R₂, R₃ and R₄ may form a ring.)

2. (original): A polyester resin composition according to claim 1, wherein the polyester is one or more selected from the group consisting of polyethylene terephthalate, polytrimethylene terephthalate, polybutylene terephthalate and polyethylene-2,6-naphthalate.

3. (original): A polyester resin composition according to claim 1, characterized in that the temperature for 5% weight loss of the laminar silicate modified with an organic phosphonium ion as measured with a Thermo Gravimetric Analysis at a temperature-elevating rate of 20°C/min in a nitrogen atmosphere is 310°C or higher.

4. (original): A polyester resin composition according to claim 1, which comprises at least 50% of a laminar silicate with an interlayer distance d_B of 2.0 nm or greater calculated from the X-ray diffraction peak, and wherein the average number of layers N_B of the laminar silicate calculated by the Scherrer formula based on the line diffraction peak and its full width of half maximum intensity is no greater than 5.

5. (original): A polyester resin composition according to claim 1, characterized in that the calcium content of the laminar silicate is no greater than 0.5% as the elemental proportion measured by fluorescent X-ray analysis.

6. (original): A polyester resin composition according to claim 1, characterized in that the quartz content is no greater than 0.009 wt%.

7. (original): A molded article composed of a polyester resin composition according to claim 1.

8. (original): A molded article according to claim 7, which is a film.

9. (currently amended): A molded article according to claim 8, wherein the diffraction peak intensity between layers of the laminar silicate in X-ray diffraction in the cross-sectional direction of the film is such that the orientation factor f_c in formula (5) below is no less than 0.8~~no greater than 0.8~~.

$$f_c = \frac{3 \langle \cos^2 \phi \rangle - 1}{2}, \quad \langle \cos^2 \phi \rangle = \frac{\int_0^{\pi/2} I_c(\phi) \cos^2 \phi \sin \phi \, d\phi}{\int_0^{\pi/2} I_c(\phi) \sin \phi \, d\phi} \quad (5)$$

(wherein f_c is the orientation factor, ϕ is the declination in the in-plane direction of the film, and $I_c(\phi)$ is the diffraction intensity for the declination ϕ).

10. (original): A molded article according to claim 7, which is a fiber.

11. (original): A molded article according to claim 7, wherein the average number of layers N_C of the laminar silicate is no greater than 5, as calculated by the Scherrer formula from the line diffraction peak and its full width of half maximum intensity.

12. (original): A process for production of a polyester resin composition according to claim 1, characterized by production with a step of (A) polymerization of a dicarboxylic acid or its ester derivative with an aliphatic glycol, and/or a hydroxycarboxylic acid in the presence of a laminar silicate that has been ion-exchanged with an organic phosphonium ion to 60-100% with

respect to the ion exchange capacity, to obtain a polyester resin composition with a laminar silicate content of 0.01-30 parts by weight with respect to 100 parts by weight of the polyester, and a step of (B) melt-kneading at a shear rate of 250/s or greater at a temperature above the melting point of the polyester.

13. (original): A process for production of a polyester resin composition according to claim 12, wherein the polyester resin composition containing the laminar silicate obtained by polymerization step (A) comprises at least 50% of a laminar silicate with an interlayer distance d_A of 2.0 nm or greater calculated from the X-ray diffraction peak, and the average number of layers N_A of the laminar silicate calculated by the Scherrer formula based on the line diffraction peak and its full width of half maximum intensity is no greater than 7.